

DUXBURY REPORTER

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2002

Deaths

Walter F. Kopke, past president of Rural and Historical Society

DUXBURY — Walter F. Kopke, 84, of Duxbury, died Thursday, Dec. 5 at his home. He was the husband of Ann (Wells) Kopke and the late Blanche (Welin) Kopke.

He was born in South Boston Feb. 18, 1918, the son of Walter F. A. and Anna (Repenski) Kopke. He was educated in Milton and graduated from Bentley College.

Mr. Kopke worked as director of purchasing for United Car, the Plymouth Cordage Company and Hollingsworth & Vost Paper Company. During his retirement he worked for Century 21, Walker Bros., in Duxbury.

He was past president of the

Duxbury Rural and Historical Society and past president of the Purchasing Agents Association of New England. He was treasurer and member of St. John the Evangelist Church in Duxbury and was on the building committee.

A park was named after him for all his services to the town of Duxbury. He also had a story told about him and his family and how they found support through hospice, published in the *Old Colony Memorial*, Nov. 27.

Mr. Kopke is survived by his wife; five children, Cris W. Kopke of Avon, Brian S. Kopke of Ottawa, Canada, Kent S. Kopke of Duxbury,

Joel M. Kopke of Absecon, N.J. and Sara K. Harvey of Duxbury; a sister, Louise Graf of Syracuse, N.Y.; 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

A service in celebration of his life will be held Friday, Dec. 13, at 1 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church, 410 Washington, St.

Donations may be made to Cranberry Area Hospice, 36 Cordage Park Circle, Suite 326, Plymouth 02360.

Arrangements by Shepherd Funeral Home, Kingston.

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'He was known as a great hugger'

'Mayor of Ashdod' dies at 87

By Kathryn Koch
MPG Newspapers

DUXBURY — As the "Mayor of Ashdod" Walter Kopke was a champion of youth programs and a valued member of various town committees.

Kopke, 84, died at home on Thursday, Dec. 5, in the final stages of Parkinson's disease.

His wife, Ann Kopke, said her husband of 40 years was always ready with a smile and a hug.

"He was a joyous, happy man," she said. "He was known as a great hugger."

She said he was also a born organizer who never stayed for the accolades but got things started and kept working for the community.

In August 2000, selectmen honored Kopke by dedicating the Walter F. Kopke Park in his name. Ann Kopke said he was very honored and happy he could attend the park dedication.

Selectmen chairman John Tuffy said Kopke was well-known around town for getting involved in land use issues, and it was fitting that the park with its playing fields and playground equipment in the Ashdod section of northwest Duxbury be named after him.

"He was a terrific guy," he said. "There are people who show their face over and over again to help the

town no matter how busy they are or how many committees they serve on. He was just one of those people."

A proclamation announcing the park dedication detailed many of his efforts as "a dedicated public servant and champion of programs for its youth."

As a public servant, Kopke served on the first town recreation committee, formerly the town hall recreation committee; served more than 15 years on the conservation commission; was a member of the town hall study committee for the present town hall; and chaired two high school committees and was chairman of the high school building committee, now the Duxbury Middle School.

He also served as treasurer of his church, president of the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society, and area representative for the American Field Service organization on the South Shore.

As champion of youth programs, Kopke was active as an umpire, manager and executive board member for the Duxbury Little League; scout master for the Boy Scouts and Sea Scouts; and was instrumental in the establishment of the original recreation facility on Keene Street for the youth of Ashdod.